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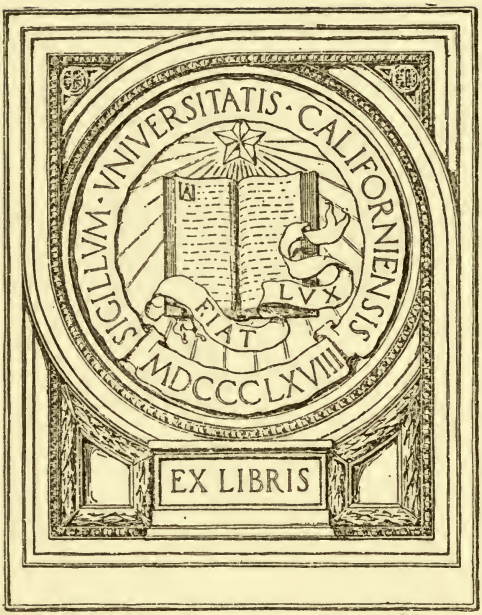
MR. FAUST

A DRAMA

By ARTHUR DAVISON FICKE



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1932

MR. FAUST

OTHER BOOKS

By Arthur Davison Ficke

SONNETS OF A PORTRAIT PAINTER
AN APRIL ELEGY
THE MAN ON THE HILLTOP
THE HAPPY PRINCESS
FROM THE ISLES
THE BREAKING OF BONDS
CHATS ON JAPANESE PRINTS
TWELVE JAPANESE PAINTERS

MR. FAUST

By

ARTHUR DAVISON FICKE

An Entirely New Version,
Reconstructed for Stage Production

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

NEW YORK
FRANK SHAY
1922

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No performance of this play, either amateur or professional, may be given except by special arrangement with the author.

NOTE:

THE original version of Mr. Faust was written by me in 1912 and published by Mitchell Kennerly in 1913. At that time Maurice Browne insisted that the work, though I had conceived it as a poem, could be acted as a play; and the result of nine years of his insistence was that in 1921 I entirely remodeled the text, for production by the Repertory Company of Maurice Browne and Ellen Van Volkenburg. In this remodeling, the suggestions of Maurice Browne, Ellen Van Volkenburg and Moroni Olsen were of an importance than can hardly be exaggerated. The result, which appears in this volume, entirely supplants the earlier edition; and I hope this is the only form in which the play will ever again be read by anyone.

A. D. F.

New York, 1922.

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Produced at the Provincetown Players Theatre

New York

January 30, 1922,

with the following cast:

MR. FAUST ---------- *Maurice Browne*

OLDHAM ---------- *Robert Bell*

BRANDER ---------- *Byron Foulger*

SATAN ---------- *Moroni Olsen*

THE HOLY ONE ---------- *Henry O'Neill*

MIDGE ---------- *Janet Young*

THE BUTLER ---------- *Jack Gude*

THE DOCTOR ---------- *Harold McGee*

Produced by Ellen Van Volkenburg

The first production of the play was at the Cornish Theatre, Seattle, on September 22, 1921, with the same cast and direction as above, except that the part of the Butler was takenby Roy Middleton, the part of the Doctor by Norman Goldstone, and the part of the Holy One by Evan E. Goldsmith.

Library of Congress

MR. FAUST

ACT I.

The scene is the library of John Faust, a large handsome room in a New York house, panelled with rows of books in open book-shelves. On the right is a carved stone fireplace, with deep chairs before it. The furniture looks as if it were, and probably is, plunder from the palace of some prince of the Renaissance.

A fire is burning in the fireplace; it, and several shaded lights, make a subdued brilliancy in the room. Before the fire sit Faust, Brander, and Oldham, all in evening dress. All three are smoking, and tall highball glasses stand within their reach.

Oldham is staring fixedly at the fire, in the attitude of one who has withdrawn his soul from all contact with a rasping world. Brander is fidgeting on the edge of his chair, as if about to speak or about to rise, but too uncertain to do either. Faust, with interested detachment, watches them both, and smokes.

The curtain rises on a long silence.

. . . Oldham sinks deeper into his reverie; Brander trembles more and more on the brink of an explosion; Faust continues to watch, interested, serious, but aloof.

Suddenly Brander looks at his glass—and with a violent gesture drinks down its contents at a swallow. He pauses, rigid. Then he springs to his feet, crosses the room, and bangs the glass down on the table. Wheeling, he confronts the others. Faust has followed him with his eyes, but now quickly averts his glance; and Brander pauses, on the edge of speech, but finding no one to speak to. He looks a moment at the two aloof figures, then laughs loudly and raspingly.

Oldham jumps to his feet, startled.

OLDHAM. What is it, Brander?

[*Brander strides to the window, pulls aside the curtains, stares out into the night, and then turns back to face Oldham and Faust.*]

BRANDER. You're crazy! . . . Look at that!

[*Oldham crosses quickly to the window.*]

OLDHAM. Look? Look at what?

[*Brander laughs harshly.*]

BRANDER. Everything that's out there!
While here you . . . [*He goes back and seats himself again.*]

[*Oldham looks angrily at Brander, closes the curtains and resumes his seat by the fire.*]

BRANDER. I beg your pardon, Faust,—did you care to look?

FAUST. Thanks, not tonight.

BRANDER. Oh, perhaps you have seen
Everything; have you?

OLDHAM. No; but Brander, one doesn't
Have to examine all the matches that come
Packed in a box to know how matches strike,—
Flame,—and go out. . . .

BRANDER. I won't be made a fool of
By you or anybody!

OLDHAM. Made a fool of!
Why, Brander, who would try to gild the lily?
Certainly neither Faust nor I. . . .

BRANDER. You are clever—
But there you end. You make these nasty remarks
Because you guess . . .

OLDHAM. More than a guess this time!

BRANDER. —Because you guess that I have fallen in love
With someone or other. Well, if I had, why try
To make me as sick of life as you two are?

OLDHAM. Because I know all about this girl of yours—
And because it is such an unwise thing to do—
Leading nowhere, making you restless, cross,
Jumpy—like this!

BRANDER. Quite idiotic, eh?

OLDHAM. Fairly so.

BRANDER. —And this comes well from you—
Wise and wonderful man!—you, an architect
Who won't build buildings—who chases all over the earth
To buy this picture or that,—which, five hundred years
Before you were born, was painted by such a man
Or such a man! Tell me,—what does it matter
Where those old pictures are,—in your rooms, or in
Some smelly dealer's in Paris?

OLDHAM. It doesn't matter.
I thought it did, once . . . .
Now I *know* I am crazy;
That is the difference between us.

BRANDER. Yes! and because
Your great design for the City Hall got chewed
To pieces among the wheels of politics,
You turn your back on life,—afraid! . . .

[*Faust, with a gesture, has attempted to stop Brander in the middle of this speech.*]

OLDHAM. Brander! . . . .
You think so? . . . .
Well, I do not doubt you are right.

BRANDER. I tell you exactly what I think, Oldham.
You needn't brag of your wisdom.

FAUST. Are we getting
Just a little personal? . . . .

OLDHAM. Oh, perhaps—but does it
Matter especially? . . . I suppose it's well
To see oneself as one is . . .
Tell me, Faust,
When, if at all, will this young thing grow up?

FAUST. I wouldn't be too hard on things that are young!
Youth is the only evil that time will cure.
[*Brander turns upon Faust.*]
BRANDER. You are a thorn to me, a thorn in the flesh.
Contagiously you bring to me mistrust
Of all my landmarks, when, as here tonight,
Out of the midst of every pleasant gift
The world can offer you, you sit and smile
In scoffing irony, mocking each face,
Form, action, motive, that together make
Your life, and ours.
FAUST. Dear Brander! Is it true
I am as bad as that? Well, though I were,
Why should it trouble you? If you find sport
In this strange game, this fevered interplay,
This hodge-podge crazy-quilt which we are pleased
To call our life—why, like it! And say: Damned
Be all who are not with me!
BRANDER. Are not you?
FAUST. I claim the criminal's privilege, and decline
To answer.
OLDHAM. Faust, might I presume so far
As to suggest that I should like a drink
Before we all start breaking furniture
Over this matter?
FAUST. Certainly; I beg
Your pardon; I neglected you.
[*Faust rises and rings a bell: the butler enters. With a gesture, Faust indicates the decanters on the table, and the butler quietly serves the three men with drinks while the conversation continues.*]
No, no,
We won't wage combat over this. You're right,
Doubtless, as usual, Brander. I have not
Your fortunate placidity of mind,
And I get grumpy . . . .
Come, take your glass;

And let us drink to the glories of the world.
Down with the cynic!

BRANDER. Down with him! The world
Is pretty glorious when a man is young
As we are. Men are doing mighty things
Today. A critic tells me that last night
Wullf at the opera sang "La ci darem"
With an artistic brilliancy of tone
That never has been heard on any stage
Anywhere in the world. And I believe it.

OLDHAM. Whom did you go with.

BRANDER. Midge.

OLDHAM. Ah, Midge again!
I thought so . . .

BRANDER. Well, I don't know why I shouldn't.

OLDHAM. Those rosy-toned remarks gave you away.
Where did you sit? Or am I venturing? . . . .

BRANDER. Up in the gallery.

OLDHAM. The top one?

BRANDER. Yes.

OLDHAM. Once more, I thought so. You and Midge would look
Nice in a box! Yes, I will pay for one
If you will take it.

BRANDER. Oh, leave me alone!

FAUST. Tell me—this "Midge" you speak of? . . . .

OLDHAM. Midge, dear Faust,
Is short for Margaret; which, you may guess,
Describes a lady of the female sex;
Said person being serviceably employed
As maid-of-all-work for some ancient dame
In Brander's own apartment house. She has,
Beside what other virtues I know not,
A most bewitching ankle and a taste
For opera. And dear Brander's kindly heart
Is so moved by the sight of these combined,
He sometimes sneaks, by lonely alley-ways,
With his fair Midge, and in the gallery

High out of sight of all of us enjoys
Her and the opera.

FAUST. And so, Brander,
You really are in love!

BRANDER. It's hardly that!
But she's a mighty jolly little thing.

FAUST. What sort of girl is she?

BRANDER. A mighty nice one!
Full of all kinds of happiness; but shy.
I'd like to see some rounder try to speak
To her on Broadway. She looks like a lady!

FAUST. That is too bad.

BRANDER. Oh, pshaw! Don't lecture me;
I'm not a saint; in fact, few of us are.

FAUST. Unfortunately not. I least of all.
And yet I wonder if . . . Oh, what's the use
Of preaching when it's only jealousy
That makes me talk! Midge sounds delectable
To me; and if I weren't a bit too bored
I'd try to steal her from you . . . Just what happens
To girls like that eventually? . . . Midge has deeps
Not pleasant under her if you let go! . . . .

BRANDER. Oh, I will not let go . . .Not yet, at least.
[*Goes to the window.*]
See, what a night it is! The stars are out
As if a bucketful of them had spilled
Across the sky. And here we sit like owls,
Blinking and staring at a little fire
When heaven is burning! I'm afraid it's time
For me to leave this owlish parliament! . . . .
Just look at this—It's after twelve o'clock!
I might have guessed it from the fatal fact
That we'd begun to talk philosophy.
Good night to both of you. And don't stay up
Talking till morning.

OLDHAM. Well, good night.

FAUST. Good night,
Brander, I'm sorry you must go: come in
Quite soon again, and I will try to be
Less disagreeable than I was tonight.
[*Brander goes out.*]

OLDHAM. He's a good fellow; but he tires me
Sometimes.

FAUST. Dear boy, I envy him! There he goes
Babbling of Midge, a charming little sphinx
Who rolls her stockings, winks a knee at him,
And gives him happiness, as they say in the books,—
Meaning, hops into bed. Where are your and my
Midges now gone? What shall we find to take
Their smiling places? Midge—across the night
I throw a kiss to you!—And, my sour friend,
I envy Brander from my soul!

OLDHAM. You're wrong!
This is not half so ludicrous as you think;
She is an exquisite child.

FAUST. And so I said!
And so I envy him, as I said.

OLDHAM. Of course,
And so do I; but I would not exchange
Heads for a kingdom.

FAUST. Are you so fond, then,
Of what's in yours?

OLDHAM. No, but at least I have
A certain faint preception of the gilded
And quite preposterous crudeness of our days—
And that is something to be thankful for.

FAUST. Gratitude is a graceful gift.

OLDHAM. Come, come!
What snake has bitten you, that to your lips
A poisoned irony so bitter springs
Tonight?

FAUST. I am revolving in my brain
This serious question: whether it is not best
That one turn humorist. The mind that seeks
Holiness, finds it seldom; who pursues
Beauty perhaps shall in a lengthened life
Find it perfected only once or twice.
But if one's quest were humor . . . .

OLDHAM. There is no humor
In what you see and I see when we look
On this crude world wherein our lives are spent—
This crass grim modern spectacle of lives
Torn with consuming lust of one desire—
Gold, gold, forever gold!—Or do you find
Humor in that?

FAUST. It might be found, perhaps:
The joke's on someone!

OLDHAM. There's no joke in it!
It is the waste, the pitiful waste of life.
[*He turns angrily*] . . . .The stars go out
In factory smoke; the spirit wanes and pales
In poisoned air. It is an infamous age
Of traders and of tricksters; all the high
And hounded malefactors of great wealth
Differ from the masses, in their wealth, indeed;
But in their malefaction, not at all.
Your grocer and my butcher have at heart
The self-same aims as he to whom we pay
Tribute for every pound of coal we burn.
Their scope is narrower, but their act the same
As his—against whose millions all the tongues
Of little tricksters in each corner store
Babble and rail and shriek!

FAUST. Almost you do
Persuade me to turn humorist.

OLDHAM. You may laugh;
But there's in all your laughter hardly more
Mirth than in my upbraidings. Ah, I grow

So weary of this low-horizoned scene,
Our generation; I am always drawn
In thought toward that great noon of human life
When in the streets of Florence walked the powers
And princes of the earth—Politian, Pico,
Angelo, Leonardo, Botticelli—
And a half-hundred more of starry-eyed
Sons of the morning! Those were days indeed;
We shall not look upon their like again.

FAUST. I am not sure.

OLDHAM. Then take my word for it!

FAUST. I am not sure; the lamentable fact
To me seems otherwise. For I believe
That this vile age of commerce and corruption
Which you describe in very eloquent terms,
Is still, upon the whole, the best that yet
Has graced our earth. And I am glad to be
A citizen of this material age.

OLDHAM. Congratulations!—Tempered with surprise
At finding you so sweet an optimist—
Whose faith can find all's for the best; and the best
This great year . . . .

FAUST. I quarrel not with ages—but with man;
Whose life such folly seems, that laughter lies
The sole escape from madness . . . .
Mountains of human effort piled aloft
Like the Egyptian Pyramids, and toward
No end save folly! . . . .

OLDHAM. Ah, you forget what Beauty was to them!
Beauty hung over them, a star to draw
Men's aspiration. That divides them quite
From our debased modernity.

FAUST. Wonderful Oldham!
My dear delightful visionary Oldham!
What an adorer of the past you are.

OLDHAM. Yes, I adore it sacredly, and loathe
Today's whole content—except you! I loathe it
So much that, if I had the dynamite,

I'd blow it all—and you and me ourselves—
Into a nebula of dust . . . Ah, well,
We hardly can decide these things tonight,
Can we? And I must go now.

FAUST. Oh, not yet!

OLDHAM. I must; this is not good for me: I fear
To let myself dwell on these restless thoughts . . . .
[*He laughs suddenly*] . . . And besides, I'm due
To pick my brother up. I have, you see,
The limousine tonight, and that entails
It's obligations. Dear modernity!
Whose Saviour is the limousine! . . . Good night!

FAUST. Good night. May all the Furies and the Gorgons
Of Greece and Florence leave you in repose
To dream tonight of white-limbed goddesses
And painters like archangels!

OLDHAM. I deserve it!
And yet I fear they will not be so kind . . . .
Sleep is no friend to me these many nights.
I do not know why night has suddenly
Become a desert,—ghostly,—horrible . . . .
One of these days, the thing will go too far . . . .

[*Oldham goes out. Faust turns out all but one of the lights; then seats himself wearily before the fire. The room is dark around his lighted figure.*]

FAUST. The play drags, and the players would begone,
Out of this theatre of tinsel days
And lights and tawdry glamour, out to face
Even the blank of night, the icy stars,
The vast abysses. What the gallery-gods
Could give, they well have given; but deities
Inscrutabler than they annul all gifts
With one gift more—the restless mind that peers
Past fame, friends, learning, fortune, to enquire:
Whither? Whither? Whither?
Today's thin coin
Pays not my labors; and tomorrow's hope

Has never been authenticated to me
By a fulfilling hour when I might say:
"Lo, this is what I hoped!" The vision flies
As I advance . . . .
And I loathe life because my hope is fairer,
And know my hope a lie. Thus, Faust, my friend,
You damn yourself ingeniously to hells
Of rich variety . . . .

[*He takes up a black note-book from the table, and idly turns the pages.*]

Why do I record
In these much-scribbled pages my sick soul?
What can it profit me through written words
To grope toward light—and grope toward light in vain? . . . .
I have been athirst of dreams! O curious heart!
O credulous and visionary heart!
Desirous of the infinite—from defeat
Arising still to grope again for light
And the high word of vision! And in vain!
The night is empty, even of ghosts . . .
I am alone in a dark where no one comes . . . .
Faust, you fool, you fool! The devil take you!

[*Faust puts out the last light. In the darkness at the back of the room appears the face of a man. His head is very peculiarly modelled; it reminds one, indescribably and faintly, of the fact that men sprang from beasts. The high position of the ears helps this impression, as does also the astonishing animal brilliance of the eyes. The face disappears. Faust, passing his hand over his forehead, turns away.*]

FAUST. This is what comes of smoking far too much.

SATAN. [*Unseen.*] Good evening, Mr. Faust.

FAUST. Well, I'll be damned! . . . .
And who are you? . . . .

SATAN. [*Face appears.*] I ask your pardon
For thus appearing in a way unknown
To strict convention. But I never set
Great store by custom; and though nowadays
I follow the proprieties, still I feel
That one need not be slavish . . . .

FAUST. Who are you?
What are you talking of? How did you get here?

SATAN. I am, sir, Nicholas Satan.

FAUST. Quite a name.
Some relative of the illustrious one?

SATAN. Himself.

FAUST. Stop this cheap foolishness! Who are you?
Or shall I ring for the police?
[*He turns on the lights. Satan is seen in evening clothes, with a sociable, rather commonplace face. His hands are horribly rigid, as if made of metal.*]

SATAN. I am
Satan. If I appeared with colored fire
And lightnings round me, you would doubt no more.
But like your narrow and near-sighted age,
You know me not in my own natural shape.
Now let this end! Here is my proof. You once
Summoned me to your aid, and, when I came,
Weakly rejected me. You were a boy
In college, and a woman blackmailed you—
A low, crude matter. I had settled it
Swiftly, if you had let me. We alone,
We three, on Harvard Bridge—night—and beneath
A practicable river: ah, it was
A child's task! But you faltered . . . You recall,
Possibly.

FAUST. I recall . . . . So you are he.
I did not know you.

SATAN. Let's forget the past.
We meet now under happier auspices.

FAUST. Incredible.

SATAN. No, quite an honest fact
Am I.

FAUST. I hardly can persuade myself
Whether to laugh or pull a solemn face
At seeing you. It is preposterous!
I thought that you were dead—a myth—a wraith.

SATAN. Dead? That is rich!

FAUST. Well . . . don't you think yourself
A slight anachronism?

SATAN. My young friend,
I am no laughing matter. With the times
I, too, have changed, and am as up-to-date
As sin and sex are.

FAUST. But your horns and tail
And pitchfork? Not a vestige do I see
Of your famed look! You have no frightful glance:
I cannot even so far flatter you
As to say special badness makes your face
Great and distinguished. If you're Prince of Hell,
How villainously have the poets lied!

SATAN. They have lied, always, horribly, of me!
I am not half so black as they allege.
You know, exaggeration is to them
What whiskey is to most men.

FAUST. I admit
They paint a certain perfectness of evil
Lacking in you.

SATAN. Surely today we know
That nothing is so wholly good or bad
As our forefathers thought: not black and white
But gray predominates. Well, I am gray,
Possibly. I was never black; and age
Has made me stouter, and with gentle warmth
Ripened my virtues; and, even though I say it,
You will not find me a bad sort to meet.

FAUST. Well spoken! And well met! Nicholas Satan,
You are the most diverting visitor
I've had in many a day. Come, have a drink.
[*He turns on the remaining light.*]
Bourbon or Scotch? . . . .

SATAN. A very little Scotch. That's plenty, thanks.
[*Satan drinks. Faust, observing for the first time the strangeness of Satan's hands, puts down his glass untasted.*]
. . . . Did you send for me
Only to have a drink?

FAUST. I sent for you?

SATAN. Did you not summon me?

FAUST. Summon you? No.

SATAN. . . . . Ah, well!
It's my mistake; wires get crossed sometimes.
I hope I've not intruded.

FAUST. Not at all.
Delighted to have met you.

SATAN. I regret
That I have bothered you. I have enjoyed
However, your kind hospitality.
To make amends to you, before I go,
I should be glad to do you any service
Within my power.

FAUST. I thank you; but I think
That there is nothing in your special line
That I have need of.

SATAN. Are you really, then,
A man contented?

FAUST. I would hardly go
As far as that! I only meant to say
My needs, my troubles, are not of such kind
As you could remedy.

SATAN. If you would speak the
Symptoms of your trouble, I venture to believe
That I could aid you. Oh, I am deeply learned!

FAUST. . . . . And besides,
A most accomplished mocker! . . . My complaint
Is quite beyond your counsel. Why, I tell you,
Nicholas Satan, sitting in my arm-chair,
I have examined, tried, experienced
The passions and the aims of mortal life
With the grave thoroughness and good intent
That mark a doctor of philosophy
Writing his thesis. And my careful search
Of life has brought me one great verity:
I do not like it! No, I do not like
Anything in it: birth, death, all that lies
Between—I find inadequate, incomplete,
Offensive. So you see me sitting here,
Instead of talking politics in the streets,
Or flirting at the opera. For the savor's gone
From these, as parts of an unsavored whole.
. . . . And only fools attain
Their hope on earth—in a fools' paradise
That does not interest me. . . . Now, could you treat
This case, good Mr. Satan?

SATAN. In my day,
I have relieved far sicker men than you,
My dear friend Faust. And yet I would not say
Even for a moment that your case is not
A serious one. In such a mood
Men sometimes have done mad and foolish things
With consequences sad to view; they set out
To revolutionize, rend, whirl, uproot
The world's foundations. And the mess they make
Is pitiful to contemplate! Such sweet
And beautiful souls as I have seen go wrong
Along this path: Shelley—he had your eyes;
And Christ—but I'll not talk theology.
Besides, his churches almost have made good
His personal havoc . . . .

FAUST. That is not my line.

SATAN. No, no, you keep your head! . . .Now let me see . . . .
A temporary sedative you require
To bridge the dangerous moment. I suggest
A little course that old Saint Anthony,
Epicure though he was, would grant as rare
And finely chosen: careless days and nights—
Exquisite company from whom some two
Or three, with golden or with auburn hair,
A man of taste might choose to solace him
In sunlight or in starlight—while the lure
Of subtle secrets in those yielding breasts
Spice the preceding revelries . . . .

FAUST. Go tell
That tale to college boys, whose lonely dreams
Have shaped Iseult of Ireland, Helen of Troy,
As end of heart's desire—and, lacking these,
Clasp chorus-Aphrodites. And I beg you
Not needlessly to tax your mental powers
By now suggesting the delights of drink:
I know them; and they give me headaches.

SATAN. I mean far subtler things: I mean the play
Of the wise soul that sees the abyss of life—
And over that dark gulf in reckless mirth
Dances on rainbows, with delightful arms
And bosoms close to his. That is a mood
That always thrills me with a sense of large
And splendid courage. If I did not think
That it would bore you, I should like to make
My meaning clear by reading a few lines
That I once wrote when I myself was in
Your very mood—Or would you care to hear
My little poem?

FAUST. What! Is even the Devil
A poet nowadays?

SATAN. Indeed he is:
And not a bad one; we have learned now-a-days

That poetry, like all the other arts,
Is pure technique; the mere ideas are nothing,
The form is everything. That ennobles us
And makes us artists . . . . With your leave, I'll read
My little poem called "A Watteau Melody."

[*Satan produces a note-book, turns over the pages, and at last begins to read.*]

Oh, let me take your lily hand,
And where the secret star-beams shine
Draw near, to see and understand
Pierrot and Columbine.

Around the fountains, in the dew,
Where afternoon melts into night,
With gracious mirth their gracious crew
Entice the shy birds of delight . . . .

. . .

Dear lady of the lily hand—
Do then our stars so clearly shine
That we, who do not understand,
May mock Pierrot and Columbine?

Beyond this garden-grove I see
The wise, the noble, and the brave
In ultimate futility
Go down into the grave.

The nations fall, the faiths decay,
The great philosophies go by—
And life lies bare, some bitter day,
A charnel that affronts the sky.

The wise, the noble, and the brave—
They saw and solved—as we must see
And solve—the universal grave,
The ultimate futility . . . .

. . .

Then let me take your lily hand,
And let us tread, where star-beams shine,
A dance; and be, and understand
Pierrot and Columbine.

FAUST. Splendid! Delightful!

SATAN. You are flattering me.
How did you like it, really?

FAUST. Well, as art
I think it charming; as philosophy,
I hardly praise it. I decline to be,
As you suggest delightfully, a fly
On the spilled beer of life.

SATAN. Those souls who take
This attitude, however, swiftly grow
The darlings of existence . . . . And yet, and yet
Your special temperament may not prefer
Nectar. Those lines of sternness round your mouth . . .
No, this is not for you . . . Another cure
Better befits you. . . .
Power I offer you—
The one chief prize that all men have desired
And shall desire forever!

FAUST. Now you grow
Rather more interesting. What do you mean?
A crown and sceptre and a thousand slaves
To serve me?

SATAN. Do not jest. I offer you
The one sole reservoir where power today
Lies stored in sleeping cataracts. At noon
Come with me into Wall Street; take your stand;
Buy, sell, as I direct you; and one hour
Shall make you richer than you ever dreamed
In madness of desire. For three days more
Come there each noon again; at end of these,
If you have done my bidding, you shall be

Master of the finances of the world.
. . . .Such power
I offer as would make the pulses beat
Even of a skeleton!

FAUST. But not a soul
Grown sceptical of life. Power? Power? For what?
And over what? And toward what? Not a power
Over myself or pain or loneliness
Or ignorance or evil; not a strength
To bid the near-world cease, and in its place
Instate my visions beautiful and pale,
Nearer the heart's desire. No, you would give
Power to direct the miseries of men,
But not to stay them . . . I thank you; but I think
I should derive small sport from such a game.
You see, I am not Satan.

SATAN. Well, you are
A subtle one, a shrewd one! On my word,
What time I have been wasting!
Mr. Faust, I put aside
All trivialities, and frankly say
That I can offer you one ultimate gift
Fit even for you—a subtle paradise
Where happiness, having fled the world, now dwells
In shining gladness. Guarded, deep, sublime
With lights and shadows, lies it: there have hearts
The weariest and the greatest of mankind
Found perfect refuge and abiding place
For time and for eternity. To few
Its gates are open: it I promise you,
If you but trust me!

FAUST. But why should I trust you?
If history speaks true, you have deceived
All who, since Eve, have put their trust in you.

SATAN. —Ah, you are wholly wrong!
I am quite honest with you, now having learned
Your true capacity.

FAUST. Perhaps, perhaps.
And yet I must decline.
SATAN. You doubt me still.
But I will prove my utter honesty,—
I will offer you a bargain whose clear terms
Must drive your doubts away. I am prepared
To pledge myself to be your abject slave
And servant for all time if you yourself
Do not acknowledge that my paradise
Delights you wholly!
FAUST. Well! That *is* an offer!
SATAN. What could be fairer? You yourself shall judge;
And you risk nothing. Ah, your look still doubts!
You have in mind those libellous poets' tales
Of bonds inscribed in blood which I exact
In payment, and destroy men's souls! My friend,
Have I yet asked you for a bond of blood?
FAUST. Well, for the life of me, I cannot read you!
Yet let me ask: why such an eager will
To serve a man into whose rooms you came
By chance tonight? . . . .
SATAN. There is
No mystery in that. I would ally
You to myself.
FAUST. Thanks, I decline.
SATAN. You fail
To understand me.
FAUST. What, then, do you mean?
What do you count on? Whence do you expect
Pay for your trouble and your risk—a risk
Not trivial, I warn you?
SATAN. Let me make
The matter clear to you. I know quite well
The risk is nothing, since my paradise
Will utterly delight you. Granting this,
You see my profit: You will stay with me

Willingly there forever, to my ends
An interested assistant. And I say
Fie for a bond scribbled in scrawly blood!
A bond of choice is better. Could a saint
Speak fairer to you? I risk everything,
And you risk nothing but a little time;
And time, as you are placed, seems not so dear
That you need hoard it.

FAUST. Are you serious?

SATAN. My jests have other aspect.

FAUST. I accept.
Your game is to my taste. But if you fail,
Friend Satan!—

SATAN. I shall not fail! . . .
—Your friend has just returned.

[*The bell rings. Butler crosses; and opens door off stage. Oldham enters. He appears distraught.*]

FAUST. Oldham! . . . .

OLDHAM. I beg your pardon, Faust;
I thought you'd be alone. My brother left,
Not waiting for me; and, as I passed by,
I saw your lights, and thought I would look in
Just for a moment. I had things to say
That are perhaps much better left unsaid.
Good-bye, my dear friend. I will not disturb you.
Good night again.

FAUST. Wait, Oldham; do not go.
I have a visitor whose name you know,
But not, perhaps, his person. Let me have
The pleasure of presenting you. This is
The Devil—Mr. Oldham.

OLDHAM. You are mad!
What jest is this?

SATAN. I am indeed the Devil.
Look in my eyes intently . . . Shall I tell you

Your thought, two minutes since? . . . Or what you hold
Clutched now against your side? . . . Or where you go
When you go hence tonight? . . .

OLDHAM. No! . . . I believe you . . .
Although it is incredible! . . . .

FAUST. Madness is in the air tonight . . . —you, and he,
And I . . . For I am going on a journey,
And do not know how soon I shall return.
If I return at all.

OLDHAM. A journey? Where?

SATAN. To paradise.

OLDHAM. To paradise?

SATAN. Come, we must haste,
For it is very far.

FAUST. To paradise! . . . .

OLDHAM. Take me with you!

FAUST. . . . . My friend
It is not possible. I do foresee
Some perils to whose touch I would subject
None save myself.

OLDHAM. And what care I for them!
Faust—on my word, when I climbed up your stair
This second time, it was to say good-bye
To you forever, being quite resolved
To end my choking loneliness and loathing
With a quick shot tonight. Take me, or I
Shall carry out my purpose. What care I
Whither you go, or what the perils be?
I would go with you into Hell!

SATAN. We go
To paradise. What is this Hell you name?

CURTAIN

THE SECOND ACT

The scene is the stone-paved courtyard of a ruined temple. In the centre lies a square pool, with wide rows of steps leading down to the water, now over-grown with lotus plants. Around the court rise long colonnades of pillars with grotesquely carven bases and capitals of luxuriant design.

Faust, Satan and Oldham, all wearing white tropical dress and sun-helmets, sit on fragments of fallen columns in front of the pool. Faust is writing in his black note-book.

OLDHAM. One's blood beats fuller in these tropic lands.
Last night, as we were dining, where the beach
With its plumed palm-trees sloped to meet the sea,
And the white foam along the glassy waves
Played in the evening light—I half believe
I could have written love-songs. But to whom—

FAUST. To Midge? . . .

OLDHAM. You needn't laugh
At her or him or me. You are only jealous,
Guessing how exquisitely pretty and shy
She is a-nestling—and that Brander is
A true philosopher . . . At this height of day
The glow is magical!

FAUST. One's brain is lit with fire
Beneath this sun.

SATAN. —Keep you to the shade!
This is the pinnacle, the very noon
Of summer in these lands. One hour of sun—
. . . . Poor Oldham and poor I
Might have a maniac or a corpse as guest.

OLDHAM. We have one now. What are you always writing
In that black book of yours?

FAUST. My soul, if you like.

SATAN. Is it worth writing?

FAUST. No. Not yet, at least.

SATAN. I have great sympathy for literary people.
They delve and write and delve and—
FAUST. Whew, this blaze
Is getting worse! Can't we move on?
SATAN. We go
No farther.
FAUST. Lovely residence!
SATAN. It is here
That our long journey terminates, my friends.
Upon this spot, I trust infallibly
To give your long-tried patience recompense.
FAUST. Recompense? I am sceptical of it!
But we deserve this! None but idiots
Would have come with you to this boiling land
On a wild-goose chase . . . .
SATAN. Await the event. You shall have recompense.
OLDHAM. Satan, what is your meaning? You have been
Through our long journey, secretive and close
Of all your purposes.
SATAN. This is the spot
Toward which our course unswervingly has aimed
Since the first day. This vast and ruined shrine
Has long been known to me. Here, in retreat
From the world's noises, dwells a holy man,
The wonder-worker of a by-gone age,
Now long forgotten by the troubled world
Except me only. 'Tis his aged hand
Shall open to you those celestial gates
We come to enter.
FAUST. Ah, a wonder-worker!
Perhaps he will perform the mango trick,
Or the rope-climbing?
SATAN. Put by your idle sneers.
He is a prophet and a saint whose like
The world can offer not. Upon his face
You shall behold such holiness as shall shake
Your heart's foundations.

FAUST. Well, I can endure
The meeting if he can.
OLDHAM. Satan, you choose
Sometimes strange company. You often speak
Of friendship with such men of holiness
As much surprises me.
SATAN. If you were but
A little wiser, you would understand
That I have taught them much, at various times,
That is of profit to them.
FAUST. Pray teach me
A little something also.
SATAN. No, you think
You know too much already . . . . Furthermore,
You do not trust me; and I will not teach
One who keeps restlessly, the whole day long,
His eyes upon me, as though fearful I
Were waiting to spring upon him unawares!
FAUST. Oh, you exaggerate.
OLDHAM. . . . . Look! Yonder
Someone is coming.
SATAN. He sees us! It is he!
He brings a bowl for water to the spring—
The very bowl I gave him! . . . .
OLDHAM. What light, what calm, what peace!
FAUST. He is, indeed,
One of the ancient prophets . . . .
[*Through the colonnade along the far side of the court-yard, there enters the Holy One, an aged man of venerable and sublime appearance, clad in a simple saffron robe. In his hand is a large copper bowl, which he carries with some care.*]
SATAN. Holy One!
Satan salutes you!
THE HOLY ONE. Satan—come again
After so long? A little longer—then
No carcass of illusion here shall wait
To greet you.

SATAN. In the greatness of the sea
All waves find home . . . .

THE HOLY ONE. Yea, verily; and the deep
Lies not far off. I am drawn nearer it
Since last you came . . . But what brings you back
To my deserted dwelling from the press
Where you are ever going to and fro
Upon the earth?

SATAN. I came to seek for you,
Whose feet are on the path of blessedness.

THE HOLY ONE. Ah, has illusion rent itself in twain
For your sight also?

SATAN. Ask me not. I come
Not on my mission, but on theirs . . . .

THE HOLY ONE. On theirs!
And who are your companions?

SATAN. Friends, who seek
What you have found.

THE HOLY ONE. They have not in their eyes
Wholly the look of seekers. Passion lurks
Along their lips . . . And yet, who knows, who knows?

FAUST. I offer you our greetings, reverend sir.
A long way have we come to meet with you,
By Satan led.

THE HOLY ONE. And what would you with me?

FAUST. Paradise! Paradise!

THE HOLY ONE. Too hotly spoken!
Go, get you the dancers of Tanjore . . . .
Paradise!

OLDHAM. You belie us, Faust. Let me
Have speech with him. . . .
Most Holy One, we come
From lands far off, where, amid toil and stress
And clamor, we have lived, till weariness
Of all life's gifts impelled us to go forth
To seek if anywhere a region lay
Where happiness still dwelt . . .

SATAN. They seek the Way, the Way, most Holy One.

THE HOLY ONE. The Blessed Eightfold Way lies free to all.
I cannot open it to them. Peace, joy, bliss,
Supernal glory is it to those souls
Who have put by the follies of their birth
And sought its refuge . . . .
But I can stretch no hand to grasp their hands
And draw them toward it.

SATAN. Yet the Holy Buddha,
Out of his infinite wisdom, far and wide
Taught men the Way . . . .

THE HOLY ONE. Aye, verily . . . . Some mood
Of evil closed my mouth . . . .
Brethren, have comfort on my frugal stones.
Ask me all ye desire.

SATAN. Most Holy One,
These are my friends; I bring them in sore need
Unto your wisdom.

THE HOLY ONE. I would do your will
In this, and in all other services,
My brethren.

SATAN. Tell to them how, in your day, you came
To that dark crossing.

THE HOLY ONE. . . . . Of that hour
What would you that I tell them?

SATAN. How, that night,
Alone in your own garden walls, beneath
The piercing stars, you gathered up your life
Into your hands, and looked at it, and dust
Fell from your eyelids . . . How, that night, you saw
Birth and desire, satiety and pain,
Recurrent yearning that is never stilled,
Agony, death, rebirth in other forms,
And agony, and desire, and agony,—
But nowhere peace.

THE HOLY ONE. Ah, I recall too well.
It is as yesterday . . . . And then I wandered
Forth from my palaces in utter pain,
Seeing the world as dust and vanity,
A desert of despair, a raging sea
Of torment . . . .
SATAN. Now why stops the Holy One?
THE HOLY ONE. It wearies me to speak, and to recall
Those perished years . . . Give me to drink.
OLDHAM. He speaks
Out of familiar deeps.
FAUST. Those cloudless eyes
Have seen what we have seen!
THE HOLY ONE. I am refreshed . . . .
Thus long ago, in my most desolate hour,
I was refreshed by draughts from the deep springs
Of light. Beneath a pipal tree I sat
In lost despair; and thither to me came
A pilgrim; read the sickness of my soul . . . .
SATAN. And told to you—what was that parable?
THE HOLY ONE. This is the tale he told me. You know it well . . . .
The Buddha came to where the sea
Curled silver-white upon the land,
And murmurs of infinity
Breathed on the sand.
And on the sand a Fisher stood
Drying his nets that late had seen
The silent caverns of the flood
And all the wastes between.
SATAN. And Buddha spake; "Thy nets are drawn,
Thy boat rocks idle on the sea,
Thy day turns westward, and is gone . . . .
Come thou with me."
THE HOLY ONE. The Fisher marvelled: "I must toil
With nets and shells among the caves,
To win the sea's unwilling spoil
From the harsh waves."

SATAN. And Buddha answered: "Cast no more
Thy nets upon the troubled sea,
Nor gather shells along the shore.
Come thou with me.
"No search for pearls shall blind thy thought,
Nor waves, with clamorous harmonies.
But in the silence where is naught
Thou shalt behold the One that is.
"And where the days now speed like foam
Across thy vision, there shall be
For thee a vast eternal home—
An infinite Sea."

THE HOLY ONE. The Fisher looked on Buddha dumb—
Looked deep into that tender gaze—
Those eyes within whose depths had come
And gone the sorrows of all days.
He looked uncomprehendingly,
And wearily he shook his head;
And turned once more to drag the sea—

SATAN. Knowing not what the Buddha said . . .

FAUST. The cup again! The Holy One is faint.

OLDHAM. He speaks a miracle! . . . .

THE HOLY ONE. And then I knew
That pilgrim as a saint, whose lips revealed
The glory of the Buddha. I beheld
My life one poisoned network of desire
And pain recurrent . . . . And I cast away
Myself,and cried: What am I but a dream,
A wave within the sea, a passing cloud
Upon the radiance of eternity?

SATAN. And so—the lust of life—?

THE HOLY ONE. And so the lust
Of life passed from me; so the narrow I
Merged in Nirvana's infinite holy calm,
Joy, nothingness, eternity and peace.

OLDHAM. Peace! . . .

FAUST. Peace . . .Like bells from upland monasteries
You speak the word that summons us. But where
In peace is room for hope?
THE HOLY ONE. Let time devour
Hope also.
FAUST. And where shall I find deeps to drown
My will, my will?
THE HOLY ONE. In that deep hidden sea
Within thy breast.
FAUST. And how shall life's whole burden
Be cast aside as nothing?
THE HOLY ONE. For that Nothing
Which is the One, the Infinite, the Great Deep.
OLDHAM. Ah, Holy One, lead your way of peace!
My life is as a desert, where desire
Haunts me ceaselessly. Instruct my soul
To follow you home to the gulfs of rest!
THE HOLY ONE. My son, thou hast spoken; the Buddha's light shall guide
Both thee and me, poor seekers. Bide with me;
And what I know, that shalt thou freely know,
And my peace shall be thy peace . . . .
SATAN. Faust, the gates
Admit one form already.
FAUST. Ah, the gates
Are pearl and silver . . . Would that there were space
Within them for such fevered heart as mine.
THE HOLY ONE. . . . . There is room for all
Whose souls renounce the world.
OLDHAM. . . . . Faust, I feel
That deep peace waiting; there all our pain shall end,
There all our passions; they die; and nothingness
Like a cool flood sweeps toward us.
FAUST. What do you see
In the wave, as it comes?
OLDHAM. The breast of peace,
And the gates out of life!

FAUST. I see the gates;
I see the cool breast of the silvery flood
Of refuge and oblivion . . . Fare you well
Oldham, and light go with you!
OLDHAM. Faust, Faust, turn not back!
FAUST. I see the light that waits you where you go;
And my heart follows you. Go! If I could pray
My prayers would follow you. My visions shall;
My love shall follow you. But I cannot come
There where you go; I cannot cast aside
All that I surely know—this pitiful
And shattered mortal life, with its strange gleams
And shadows . . . Were the burden of my pain
A single atom greater—were my soul
A single breath more weary—I would come.
But now I must confront my destinies,
Still master . . . .
But you I cannot counsel . . . .
OLDHAM. Me the peace
Already laps with the waves of the flood.
FAUST. The flood is sundering us.
OLDHAM. Farewell, farewell,
Beloved friend. I with the Holy One
Henceforth am linked; but grief shall follow me
In what should be your footsteps.
FAUST. Have no grief.
In the vast deeps of life's salt bitter sea
Perhaps awaits my anodyne . . . .
OLDHAM. . . . Farewell! I go to paradise.
SATAN. Faust!

[*Oldham and The Holy One move slowly away together, pass through the colonnades, and disappear. Faust follows with his eyes their retreating figures.*]

SATAN. You do not know a paradise when you see it!
Someday, when I have time, I'll start a school
To give instruction to great minds like you—
Debutant! . . . .

FAUST. Two men are worth a thousand devils still.
SATAN. I over-rated you. Now get you gone
Before I call the savagery that sleeps
Here in the jungle to annihilate you
For your unparalleled stupidity.
FAUST. Stupidity or no, I have a word
Still to say to you, my malicious friend:
To heel!
SATAN. What!
FAUST. To heel, I say! Crouch down
And follow me, my hound and servitor
From this hour forth!
SATAN. You have grown very witty.
Your wit, however, does not please me.
FAUST. Please you!
There are few things that I desire less.
To heel!
SATAN. What fiends possess you? . . . Ah, I see!
You are still thinking of that wager made,
That jest of ours.
FAUST. I am still thinking of it.
SATAN. You do not mean that now you wish to claim
That forfeit seriously?
FAUST. I mean quite that.
SATAN. What an amazing man you really are!
For your own sake, I tried to offer you
A splendid paradise; and now you turn
And just because your uttermost crazy whim
Is not quite satisfied, you revert, with sorry taste,
To my old careless generous remarks.
I do not think your friends at home would call it
A sporting attitude.
FAUST. The jungle shakes—
Do you not hear it?—with the stifled, choked
Laughter of leopards, elephants, hyenas,
Rhinoceroses, apes, pythons, and tigers,
Who hear you and are overcome with mirth . . . .
I also laugh with them.

SATAN. Magnanimous
Your laughter sounds! True, you have beaten me,
And I am at your mercy. And I stand
Ready to pay.
FAUST. Ah, at last we have
Acknowledgment of it! Frankness is good
Even for the Devil, Satan.
SATAN. I have been
Frank with you always. And, if to your taste,
I will be franker still. Your stake is won;
You have your triumph: but does it quite fill
The chambers of your heart? . . . . Ah, my friend,
In copper you have won, but lost in gold!
And victory will not requite for that
Your empty treasury.
FAUST. Not empty quite;
You are too modest.
SATAN. Oh, if you choose, my pledge
Shall be fulfilled, and I will be your dog—
Snarling a little, sometimes—snapping at
Your friends and furniture and lady-loves —
But yet your dog. However, I can do
Better for you than that . . . .
FAUST. Enough! Enough!
SATAN. But hear me! You'll admit, a feather's weight,
A hair's breadth only, held you from the gates
That Oldham entered.
FAUST. Yes,
I will admit that.
SATAN. Good! Now, I would make
One final offer to you. Faust, I know
In other regions, beneath other skies,
One haven more, the only one of earth
That can be judged in glory to surpass
This paradise you entered not. And I say:
Give me the leave, and I will lead you there.
And if this refuge gives not all that you desire,

My pledge shall still be valid, you still may claim
My service as your slave . . . .

FAUST. A pleasing logic; but I do not trust
The mind behind it.

SATAN. Trust it, or distrust—
What matter?—when the issue is so plain!

FAUST. Another bargain? Another hope?

SATAN. If hope
Is vain to urge you, let despair
Serve in its stead. For see where now you stand:
The mock of destiny—the man who lost
All joys of the bright many that the world
Cherishes! . . . . Though I led you on
From paradise to paradise, and none
Sufficed you—that were surely better sport
Than finger-twirling! But not thus I lead.
For now you shall, you shall have paradise.

FAUST. Deep in my soul, there is a sense that loathes
Pacts with the Devil.

SATAN. Yet the world's established powers
Have proved themselves ignorant of paradise!

FAUST. Where lies it?

SATAN. Follow, and I will lead.

FAUST. A long path?

SATAN. Yes.

FAUST. On! But your bondage waits you at the end.

SATAN. Ah, jester, jester! . . . . Come, give me your hand!

CURTAIN

THE THIRD ACT

The scene is the nave of a great cathedral. The rows of many-shafted columns stretch back to where, in the background, rises the elaborate magnificene of the High Altar.

The nave is empty; in the distance the organ sounds; a girl enters and kneels before the Altar.

Satan, dressed in the dark robes of a priest, enters from the right. The girl, her prayer completed, moves into the shadows, as Faust enters and confronts Satan.

FAUST. I care not for your masquerade attire;
But let that pass . . . Well, I have kept your hour.
And this perhaps is not unfitting place
To make confession that you weary me
A little. In this running to and fro
Over the earth, my inclination tires
Of your companionship. I am resolved,
If three days' time brings forth no new event,
To end this, and reclaim you to obey
My will.

SATAN. . . . . If you'll let me interrupt—
There is a girl there who, I almost think,
Is waiting for a chance to speak to you.
She's rather pretty, and she's very shy.
Perhaps some cast-off love of yours?

FAUST. . . . . Where is she?
Oh yes, I see . . . . No, she's no love of mine.
I rather wish she were.

SATAN. She looks at you, and hesitates, and turns—
As though a little fearful to approach
So great a person.

FAUST. But who can she be?
I wonder if I know her.

SATAN. She is coming.

[*The girl comes from between the pillars and approaches Faust. Satan withdraws a little as she approaches.*]

THE GIRL. I did not want to interrupt your talk;
But, Mr. Faust, I wished so much to speak
To you. You do not know me?

FAUST. Why, it seems . . . .

THE GIRL. Of course you do not; why should you remember?
But I have seen your face so many times
When you perhaps not noticed me at all,
That I feel half-acquainted. Mr. Brander
Speaks of you, too, so much that I have grown
To think I know you.

FAUST. Ah; yes, Brander . . . .

THE GIRL. Still
I have not told you who I am, and you
Do not yet know me. I am Mrs. Brander.

FAUST. What! Mrs. Brander! Ah, delighted . . . .yes . . .

THE GIRL. You had not heard that we were married?

FAUST. No.
Of course, I am astounded; it's delightful—
And most surprising.

THE GIRL. It was very sudden—
While you were gone.

FAUST. I see. Yes, I'm surprised
And charmed. It's strange, at first I could not bring
You to my memory.

THE GIRL. I don't believe
That you can yet!

FAUST. Why . . . .

THE GIRL. I don't wonder at it.
I used to whisk about and peer at you
As you came in . . . .

FAUST. Are you then . . . then are you . . . .
Midge?

MIDGE. Yes! exactly.

FAUST. This is very charming.
Now I remember perfectly, of course,
Dear Mrs. Brander! I shall hope to see
Brander himself tomorrow. Give him, please,
My warmest wishes.

MIDGE. We shall hope to see you
In our apartment soon. It's very tiny
And in a quite unfashionable street;
But it looks out across a bit of park
To westward, as I've always hoped it would.
Some days the sunset lights are lovely there.
You must come look at them.

FAUST. Thank you—indeed
I shall be very glad to!

MIDGE. And I know—
How shall I say it?—that you'll think me strange,
And that I cannot ever be your friend
As Mr. Brander is. I know so little—

FAUST. Dear Mrs. Brander!

MIDGE. But I am so eager
That you should give me just a little trial—
I want so much to know you, and so much
He should not lose you . . . .

FAUST. Why, you make me feel
Quite like a monster!

MIDGE. Then you'll come?

FAUST. I'll come!

MIDGE. I am so happy! You must talk to me
Sometimes a little, as you used to talk
At the men's parties. Oh yes, I could hear
Sometimes. It was so wonderful, what you said—
About the things I've always tired my heart
In thinking of,—life, and . . . . I know you know
So much of all the things I've always wanted
To learn about!

FAUST. My dear and trusting child!
You pay me terrible compliments . . . It is true I have
Been seeking wisdom, but I have not found it.
And all I know is that we all must seek
Our own authentic paths, at any cost,
Through all temptations.—But that's a lengthy story!
MIDGE. And will you tell it to me?
FAUST. Perhaps, someday!
Or you can read it.
MIDGE. Read it? . . . .
FAUST. I am writing it all down in a book.
MIDGE. Oh, may I see it? Could I take it to read?
I'd be so careful of it.
FAUST. No, not yet.
Perhaps someday. I'll let you know someday.
MIDGE. Oh, I shall ask you for it when you come!
You do not know how I am in need of it.
FAUST. Yes . . . . Yes . . . . Unhappy eyes . . . . you
have dreamed too much . . . .
MIDGE. But they were lovely dreams!
FAUST. The more dangerous!
MIDGE. I am not afraid!
FAUST. No, you are not afraid! . . . .
—Who are you?
MIDGE. I don't know yet . . . .
FAUST. Nor do I! . . . .
MIDGE. And does it matter?
FAUST. Very little . . . . You are
Lost, and lovely . . . . Forgive me for what I say
And for what I do not say. You are a dear child.
I shall come to see you someday.
MIDGE. Come soon! Remember
We wait for you. Goodbye. And don't forget me.
FAUST. Goodbye. I will come without the slightest fail.
Goodbye! . . . .
MIDGE. Goodbye.
FAUST. Goodbye.

[*Midge gives him her hand, and moves away smiling.*]

SATAN. [*Enters.*]
Are you quite through? . . . .

FAUST. Quite, thank you . . . . She is curiously fresh and sweet . . . .
But I forget; you are not interested.
What is it you would say now?

SATAN. I have things
Graver to speak of than admiring ladies. Here today
Unto your doubting eyes there shall be made
A revelation of profounder scope
Than aught that life has brought you.

FAUST. The hour strikes
Tardily; I am wearier than I was
When on this trial we entered.

SATAN. You have looked
Askance at me these many days, perplexed
With my strange acts, and with the dark report
That you have heard concerning me. Dear friend,
Be you not angry, now I say to you
I have deceived you: I have with doubtful mask
In alien guises tempted you, to try
Your metal. But the hour of trial is past;
The event is sure; and now I open my heart
And show to you what few of living men
Have guessed—my final secret.

FAUST. Play no tricks
Before me, Satan; try no mumming game.
If you speak truth, let riddles cloak it not.

SATAN. Listen, and be truth's judge. I am not such
As men esteem me; and my spirit's springs
Rise not from buried and infernal realms,
But like your own, out of the fount of God
They have their being. I, though lowliest far,
Yet am a servant of the House of God—
Deputed to mine office by His hand,
And on His mission.

FAUST. A peculiar thought!

SATAN. I speak the gospel of the living God.

FAUST. Are you not Lord of Evil? God doubtless asks
That service of you?

SATAN. God is infinite,
Likewise His wisdom. His omniscience wills
That I go forth among the haunts of men
And offer evil to their touch. Thereby,
Some spurn me—and the force whereby they spurn
Lifts them up nearer to His arms. Some take
The sin I offer, fall from grace, go down—
And lost in fathomless gulfs of wickedness,
Cry out with utter yearning to His love
That it may save them. But some few souls,
Who neither spurn temptation nor repent
After their fall—these unregenerate
It is mine office wholly to destroy
And cleanse the universe for the praise of God.
Thus does all evil serve His mighty throne,
And all return to Him.

FAUST. I have no power
To take the measure of the words you speak.
Why tell me such things?

SATAN. My beloved friend,
Such was your trial; thus have I tempted you
With things averse to God, with forms and faiths
Outcast and separate from Him. You have seen
The whole world's vanities; you have come to know
That in this world's illusion is no power
Whose love is refuge: even the living death
Of cold Nirvana frights you. Thus at last,
Knowing that you are powerless, and the world
Bare of salvation for your feebleness,
You stand on this great threshold; and your eyes
That see despair and loneliness shall raise
Their sight to heaven; and peace shall fold you round;
And God, who is our Father, shall be yours.

FAUST. This is not truth! The ramparts of the world
Reel round me. I have scoffed God all my days,
Believing pain—your province of the world—
Proof of His non-existence. And you come
Crying His glory, testifying His faith,
Exhorting me to seek Him! . . . .

SATAN. He is your hope,
Your sole salvation in a universe
Where never other form shall comfort you—
A waif except for Him. So have all souls—
The holy and the pure—from age to age
Yearned, homesick for His home, crying: "O God, support
My helplessness; unto Thy perfect will
Do I resign my vain and evil hopes,
My burdens; and Thy Will Be Done Forever."
They seek Him: and a sudden glory fills
The humbled bosom; all His stars and thrones
Shine down upon it; all His majesty
Enters that lowly door, lifts up, sustains
The sundered soul; from His immortal light
Reflected radiance pours; to the dark sight
Comes glimpse of the high justice of God's will;
And all roads lead to Heaven, and all hearts lie
Within His love, and all's well with the world.

[*Deep organ music begins to roll through the arches of the cathedral. Faust stands silent and lost in meditation. Brander enters; he passes the spot where Faust is standing, glances at him and stops, astonished.*]

BRANDER. You have come back! I had not heard of it.
Where have you been these many months? I long
To talk to you.

FAUST. Yes, come and see me soon.
It's a long story . . . . I congratulate you
Upon your marriage . . . .

BRANDER. Then you know . . . .

FAUST. She came
And spoke to me a little while ago.
She is quite lovely . . . . Oh, amazingly lovely.
BRANDER. It must seem strange to you beyond my power
Ever to quite unravel.
FAUST. Do you mean . . . .
BRANDER. I have changed in your long absence.
FAUST. I do not understand.
BRANDER. You know my life—how vain
It's occupations, how absorbed I moved
In this day's folly and tomorrow's lure.—
That night we talked together—you and I
And Oldham—in your rooms, I wandered home
Sorely distressed. For you had stirred in me
A gnawing doubt whether the whole of life
Was not mere child's play.
FAUST. I am sorry if—
BRANDER. It was the kindest act man ever did
In all my life! I peered into my heart;
I saw that girl, whose courage was her love,
Yielding her whole life to me with a smile;
I saw myself Judas to innocence,
Betraying lightly with a careless kiss
A mortal body and immortal soul.
That night, I walked in Hell . . . .
FAUST. Poor Brander! And my mocking did all this?
BRANDER. Thank God for it! That night a sense of sin
And loathing swept me. Like a burden lay
That weight upon me, and it pressed me down
To a despondence deep beyond all words,
Beyond all thought. And no escape I saw
Except the bullet. . . . .
FAUST. What a faith we pin
Upon that bullet!
BRANDER. And the mad days
Passed like a nightmare. Till, one Sabbath morn,
As restlessly I paced, some random mood
Led me to enter this cathedral's doors

At hour of service. As I knelt, with lips
Unknown to prayer, the mighty music rolled
Over my heart like an all-purging flood,
And a voice chanted: "He that loveth life
Shall lose it; he that hateth this world's life
Shall keep the life eternal." And a voice
Shortly thereafter sang, in angel tones:
"Come, let our feet return unto the Lord;
For He hath torn, and He will heal us." And
My soul cried: "Yield thy burdens to the Lord,
And bid His Will Be Done." And then my soul
Melted as in the warmth of His embrace.
My guilt was gone like night before the sun:
Light blinded me; an infinite love and joy
Lifted me up, a child again, from earth
Into such regions as my mortal speech
Can never utter. And from that hour forth,
God has been with me . . . . Now you know my tale.

FAUST. You teach me more of marvels than I guessed
Was yet unlearned by me.

BRANDER. No words can teach
These marvels to a heart that has not known
God's glories.

FAUST. Then this mystery of the heart
Is what men mean when of the faith of God
They speak; this life; this vision?

BRANDER. Now do I walk in meadows of calm light;
The love of God is over me; I faint
Almost beneath its sweetness; . . . .
My whole heart's toil is how to merit it
Even a little.

SATAN. [*Raising his hand to bless Brander, who kneels before him.*]
By the grace of God
Thou shalt be worthy servant, O my son.

FAUST. This, then, is what God's vision-seers behold—
This revelation, veiled unto mine eyes—
This love unfelt by me—

[*The music of the organ rolls forth once more; and at the far end of the nave the choir takes up the music. Midge enters, unseen by Faust.*]

VOICES SINGING

From the waters of Zion,
From the fountains of peace,
Pour the floods on whose bosom
Thy seeking shall cease.

Thou shalt sleep and awaken;
On His morrow, to be
As a star in His heavens,
A wave in His sea.

FAUST. With old, profound, unutterable grief
My spirit speaks in me: as, many a time
In childhood, at the hour of evening dusk,
When all the room was still and shadowy,
I, at my mother's knee, wept out my heart
And knew not why I wept. And I am drawn
Out of myself upon the music's tide,
With nameless sorrowing, with childlike pain—
As though in careless play-hours of the day
I had done hurt to someone that I loved.
Ah, I am homesick; and in all the world
There is no knee at which I can weep out
My loneliness. There is no breast of peace
And silence and forgiveness for this child
In any dusk-strewn chamber . . . .

BRANDER. There is God!

FAUST. O God, can Thine arms fold me? Can my weight
Of loneliness and failure and despair
With the day's fruitage, find a child's release
In Thy great tenderness? I am a child;
And life's vast terrors gather round my soul;

And I am frightened. I am weary, Lord!
It darkens; and the storms creep on with night;
The shadows come; the wanderer would turn home.
[*Faust falls to his knees; he bows his head. Again the choir sings. Midge kneels.*]

VOICES SINGING

To His peace shalt thou yield thee;
In His love shalt thou sleep;
All the rills of thy valleys
Shall merge in His deep.

And the vain stars of longing
Shall fade in His sun;
And the vain hand shall stay;
And His Will Shall Be Done.

SATAN. Let us beside our brother kneel in prayer
Beseeching mercy.
[*Satan and Brander kneel beside Faust.*]

BRANDER. Brother in the Lord,
Let us together from devoted hearts
Repeat: "Thy Will Be Done."
[*Faust continues to kneel in silence.*]

BRANDER. Faust, let us pray:
"Father, we do beseech Thee for Thy light." . . . .

SATAN. [*Rising.*]
Brother, pray thus: "Thy Will Be Done." . . . .
[*The music ceases.*]

FAUST. [*Rising.*] What will?
[*Midge and Brander rise.*]

BRANDER. Faust!

FAUST. Lost is my way among eternal shadows.
Darkened is every light. But I stand upright
Now to the end, no traitor to that dawn
I cannot image.

SATAN. What do you mean?

FAUST. Begone,
Judas!
[*Satan slinks into the shadows.*]
Ah, Brander, would that I could yield
Myself to Him who has received your burdens!
But to me seems it as another sleep,
A yielding to the blindness of some Will,
Whose Will, we know not, nor do greatly care
So long it be not our will . . . .
Thus may yield
The weary; I am weary, but not yet
To such last sleep. Thus may yield the base;
I am not base. Wherefore I still shall seek
In life itself my refuge: not in God;
[*Turning to altar*]
And cry: "With all its bitterness on my head,
My Will be done, not Thy Will!"

BRANDER. Blasphemy!
Ah, Faust, what madness! . . . .

FAUST. I go into a darkness past your thought.
. . . . My last altar lies
Smoking in ruins; and I stand alone
Of all the universe. But my Will be done!
My errant tortured Will, my bitter Will,
My Will, my Will!

BRANDER. Flee, ere the awful wrath
Of God smite down these walls! . . . .
Flee, ere the heavens rain forth
Lightnings to blast us for these horrors!

FAUST.. [*At altar.*] Nay!
In this dark hour I lift my voice, and cry—
My curse upon Thee, lure of dying hearts!
May lightnings smite Thy altars back to earth!

BRANDER. Father, forgive! He knows not what he does . . . .

FAUST. I know! I know! . . . .
There is no God but Satan, and he is death!

SATAN. [*Emerging from the shadows, to Brander.*]
Can this thing be? and God not smite to purge
His universe? Are there no miracles?
BRANDER. One is born!
I am God's hand!
[*He siezes a heavy crucifix from the altar, and strikes Faust to the ground.*]
BRANDER. Betrayer of God and man!
God lives! . . . .
[*Midge rushes to Faust and kneels beside him.*]

CURTAIN

THE FOURTH ACT

The scene is once more Faust's library. The moonlight streams through the open windows, touching the gold of books and the brown of furniture with an enamel-like brilliancy. Faust's butler crosses at the back of the scene.

BRANDER. [*Off.*] Good evening.

BUTLER. [*Off.*] Good evening, sir.

BRANDER. [*Off.*] May I come in?

BUTLER. [*Off.*] Certainly, sir.

BRANDER. [*Entering.*] And how is Mr. Faust?

BUTLER. [*Entering.*]
The doctor is still here. I do not know
If anyone may see him.

BRANDER. I will wait
A moment, and . . . Have things been bad today?

BUTLER. Yes, sir.
[*The doctor enters.*]

DOCTOR. [*to Butler.*] Will you please—
[*Butler indicates Brander's presence.*]

BRANDER. How is he?

DOCTOR. As one might expect.
The fever's gone; but strength has gone with it:
No one can tell how long his heart will stand
The strain.
[*To Butler.*]———Please go to Mr. Faust.
[*Butler goes out.*]

BRANDER. You see no hope?

DOCTOR. I only see
That we are doing all we can for him.

BRANDER. You think I should not see him?

DOCTOR. Oh, no harm.
You might have seen him when you came this morning
If you had waited. You can see him here.
He wanted to be in this room again,
And I make no objection. Wait here a moment.

[*The doctor goes out. Brander moves restlessly about the room. A moment later Faust is helped into the room by the butler and the doctor. He is clad in a long dressing-gown; he is very pale. Brander remains doubtfully in the background.*]

DOCTOR. [*Off.*] Now, Mr. Faust. Slowly.
[*Entering.*] Carefully now.
[*Faust sees Brander; Brander turns away.*]
Carefully at the steps here. Slowly. Slowly.
[*To Butler.*] Now with me.
Again. That chair beside the fire. Slowly. Slowly.
[*They seat Faust in his chair.*]
[*To Butler.*] Adjust that cushion. Now we're all right.
Comfortable? [*To Butler.*] Come with me.
[*The doctor and the butler go out. Brander doubtfully approaches Faust.*]

BRANDER. I have been heavy-hearted; but that thus
I find you, overwhelms me . . . .

FAUST. Why thus sad
Over milk so irrevocably spilled?

BRANDER. I cannot utter what is in my heart.
I cannot believe it was this hand struck you down.
It was a dream of crazy horrors . . . .
[*He kneels beside the chair.*]
O Faust, Faust, forgive me!

FAUST. Forgive you? Yes, and thank you! . . . .
Now, past all doubts and wanderings, I am saved!

BRANDER. Saved!

FAUST. Saved! I believe!

BRANDER. Faust! O dearest friend! If it were possible!

FAUST. Nay, my words
Mean more than you interpret. I am saved—
I have escaped from all the bondages,
And now bow down to nothing.

BRANDER. [*Rising.*] You are sick and spent.

I should not thus—

FAUST. Fear not; I do not wander.
Please ring that bell for me.
[*Brander rings. The butler enters.*]

FAUST. Bring me, please,
That small black notebook I was writing in
Last night until the doctor took it from me.
You'll find it by my bed . . . .
[*Brander starts to speak, stops, and paces the room. The butler returns with the notebook, which he hands to Faust. The butler goes out.*]

FAUST. Here is my soul—the all I have to give
To those I love so much . . . . Thou who seemest near,
Oh unborn man, whose soul is of my soul,
Thou, too, shalt fight with Satan, as I fought,
Fight, in eternal battles, with him who seeks
To lure the soul toward darkness and toward sleep.
But vain his victories; slowly there is born
Light from the darkness, Faust's from Satan's soul.
This is my faith; this is my happiness;
This is my hope of heaven; this is my God.

BRANDER. The eternal God in heaven forgive you this!

FAUST. The Devil I can foil, but not my friends!

BRANDER. [*Kneeling beside Faust.*]
Faust! Faust! Turn back before the hour has struck!
Sink your vain pride of spirit—kneel to God,
Beseech His mercy before it is too late!

FAUST. I am no melancholy death-bed scene
To claim your tears, dear Brander . . . .
But if I die, then go I singing down,
Not praying or repentant.

BRANDER. [*Rising.*] Through last night's long hours,
Poor Midge, alone and comfortless, wept out
Her heart.

FAUST. Midge?

BRANDER. Yes, she had heard your words
In the cathedral.

FAUST. Midge!

BRANDER. Yes, she was there.
And she grew mad with your wild impious dream,
And cried you were a prophet and a light,
And when I tried to calm her, she turned from me
And cried: "Go, go! . . .
I am lost where none can help me; all my dreams
Shudder and perish, even as he has perished;
Yet they shall live again—but he will die!" . . .
Thus darkness falls from you upon men's hearts.
I know not if God's deep forgiving love
To such as you is granted. . . .

FAUST. Midge could tell
A truer tale.

BRANDER. She wept her heart out.

FAUST. . . . And shall I then regret?
Is her soul yours, that you appraise and know?
Midge understands! . . . .
Tell her from me that I have not forgotten
My promise in the church that I would come.
But if I come not, let her come to me!

BRANDER. Terrible teacher, what can you give to her?

FAUST. All that the hunger of her heart desires,
And it shall haunt her down her mortal days.

BRANDER. I love you, and I pity you—and I go. . . .

FAUST. We shall not meet again.

[*Brander goes out.*]

He will go down
Not singing, no, not singing! . . . .
And now, when from my shoulders like a load
Begins to slip the weariness of life,
And a new vigor fills me—now it seems
That death is hovering close. O Grisly One,
Whom once I thought a not unwelcome guest
To my cold troubled house, I am not glad
To hear thy steps without. For in my halls

Lights kindle, and the music sobs and sings
In ecstacy of other guests than thee. . . .

[*Satan enters slowly, and is met by the butler, who starts back and pauses paralyzed for a moment, then turns and comes down to Faust.*]

BUTLER. There is a—a man waiting to see you, sir.

FAUST. Let him come in.

BUTLER. I beg your pardon, sir—
Can I do nothing for you?

FAUST. Thank you, nothing.

[*The butler goes out again. Satan is dressed in a long black cloak of foreign cut; for the first time, he has the look of sinister majesty appropriate to the Prince of Hell.*]

SATAN. Master, your slave is here! . . . .

FAUST. Peace from your childish talk. The game is done.
I would not, for all treasure in the world,
Have such a one as servant, who can serve
No end that I desire.

SATAN. Aha! At last
Light penetrates that cobwebbed cranium,
And I can laugh in public! All these months,
I several times have come perilously near
Bursting with mirth at the rare spectacle.

FAUST. Pray you, laugh freely.

SATAN. Nay, my mirth is spent.
My heart is moved even toward an enemy,
When on his head defeat its torrent pours.
I offer you my sympathy.

FAUST. My thanks
Are in appropriate measure tendered you.

SATAN. Distrust me not, for now the game is done—
Why should we quarrel further?

FAUST. Why, indeed?

SATAN. I hear you are still working on that book

Recounting your adventures with the Devil.
I hope 'tis finished: it had better be!
You will not write large libraries, my friend,
In what of life remains to you.

FAUST. It is
Completed.

SATAN. May I look at it?

FAUST. You may not.

SATAN. Ah, 'tis a surprise for me!

FAUST. Possibly.

SATAN. Well, you work late into dusk.
Dusk falls about you; soon the night will come,
And silence . . . . [*The room begins to darken slowly.*]
Has an oracle in your heart
Whispered the tidings of that night? Or have
The pages of the prophets told to you
What waits within that darkness?

FAUST. There waits sleep.
But I have lived, and do not fear life's last
Inevitable word.

SATAN. My lips are sealed:
Though I would fain prepare you for that first
And awful moment when, beyond death's gates,
You see and know—for now you do not know—
What there awaits you. You have seen the grave;
You know the dissolution and decay
That folds the body as it mouldering lies
After the racking of those final hours
Where soul and body part. But have you guessed
That—as the body rots without the soul—
So the soul crumbles in a vile decay
You cannot picture, when the body dies?
Then falls the spirit limb from reeking limb.
An agony beyond all mortal thought
Shakes every atom of the spiritual frame—
The throes of dissolution. Death, indeed,

All men can bear; but this last spiritual death,
This torture of the disembodied soul
To force dissolving—ah, prepare yourself!
It shall appall you!

[*By this time the room is entirely dark, save for a faint red glow from the fire on the face and hands of Faust and Satan.*]

FAUST. If it comes, it comes.

SATAN. We have been foes; but now I speak as friend.
This shall not come to you! 'Tis in my power
To save you from this uttermost horror's grasp.
For I have gift of perfect dreamless sleep;
And those to whom I give shall after death
Slumber unconscious while the awful change
Attacks them; and oblivion shall be theirs.

FAUST. That were a boon not easily despised.

SATAN. It shall be yours! My crushed and broken foe
Shall never at my hand lack final rest
Where nightmares cannot come. As honest foes
We shall be quit. And for this priceless gift
I ask but that you give me, as remembrance,
That book which you have wrought concerning me.

FAUST. Why still so eager?

SATAN. Eager? I am not.

FAUST. Satan, my soul still sees,
[*Gradually the light begins to return.*]
though death has drawn
Its curtains round my body. You have sought
With long endeavor to enslave my will
To nothingness; now you would doom to dark
My written soul:
[*Opens the notebook.*] This, Satan, is your answer—
[*He writes on the last sheet of the manuscript.*]
With this last word I close my testament:
"Man, work thy will, and God shall come of thee."

SATAN. Poor thwarted fool, who would not take my lures,
Being far too wise! Yet dustward now he turns,
And where Faust stood shall nothingness survive.

FAUST. Approach me not: I have grown sanctified.

SATAN. Dreamer, whose dreams shall soon be choked with dust!

FAUST. [*Slowly lifting in his chair.*]
I am that dreamer to whose mounting dreams
No bounds are set, no region which my will
May not reach out toward. And I will create—
I, and the souls that after me shall come—
By passion of desire a pillar of flame
Above the wastes of life. If no God be,
I will from my deep soul create a God
Into the universe to fight for me!
[*He sinks back.*]

SATAN. How strong a master! Why not slay me now?
Put forth your strength, and try how great it is!

FAUST. Though dying, I am master. But you still
Are jester, even at death-beds—knowing well
I have no power to slay you. You retreat
But perish not; the sphere of your domain
Contracts, but it endures immortally.
Have done with jesting: look me in the eyes!
Acknowledge me, and all high heritors
Who shall succeed me, your eternal foe,
Your eternal victor in half-victories—
But never your destroyer to the end.

SATAN. I thank all prophets for their prophecy!
But I shall still remain? . . . .

FAUST. You shall remain . . .

SATAN. I shall remain! . . . .
[*Faust and Satan sit silent. Faust closes his eyes, then suddenly, with a sobbing gasp, raises himself in his chair.*]

FAUST. Ah, what a ghastly dream!
I have dreamed dark dreams—one very dark of late—
But that is past . . . .
Now, in the cities, on the hills of the world,
I shall uplift the banner of high wars—
I shall live—and Death retreats from me afraid!
[*He collapses.*]

SATAN. You shall die.

FAUST. Spare your pains.

SATAN. I lift no finger.

FAUST. The tide of strength recedes, swift as it came . . .
Oldham! I cannot die! I cannot die!
And I am dying . . . .

[*Faust sinks back with closed eyes. Satan suddenly screams with laughter. The laughter is interrupted by the entrance of Midge, who carries an armful of flowers. She looks steadily at Satan, who retreats a little; then she crosses the room to Faust's side. She stands motionless, then drops the flowers and kneels with her head on Faust's lap. Slowly she lifts her head, and looks at Faust's immobile face.*]

SATAN. [*After a pause.*] Madam, you come too late.

[*Faust opens his eyes—and, lifting the manuscript, with feeble hands holds it out to her.*]

FAUST. No, not too late . . . .

[*Midge, shaken and faltering, clasps the book to her.*]

FAUST. Touch me across the dusk . . . .

[*He dies. She slowly lifts her hand and touches his cheek; then drops her head. Satan approaches. She raises her head and looks at Satan. He retreats before her look, as the lights fade out, leaving the glow of the firelight on Faust's dead face.*]

CURTAIN

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